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Local labor unions publish about 32 newspapers (20 of which were founded in 1950). Additional newspapers published by national unions bring the total up to about 80 labor-union newspapers in China.

The many ethnic minority groups also publish newspapers in their own languages, thus helping to raise the political and cultural level of these formerly oppressed segments of the people. By the end of 1950, 16 such newspapers existed. The liberation of Tibet was followed by the founding of a Tibetan-language paper which has been published in Tsinghai Province since the end of January 1951. It serves more than 400,000 Tibetans and Mongols living in the province.

According to estimates by Vice-Premier Kuo Mo-jo, by the fall of 1950, China had "624 newspapers, of which 165 were dailies. Of these, 43 were privately owned and 216 were army newspapers. According to incomplete estimates of May 1950, the 153 daily newspapers counted had a daily circulation of 2.6 million copies. Radio news coverage was fostered through the establishment of the Hsin-hua News Agency with seven large offices and 43 small branch offices in China and three overseas offices. The Prague Office also covers Germany. In August 1950, there were 83 radio stations."

"Master the characters!" is the slogan of the literacy drive in the struggle for cultural liberation. Although there are approximately 40,000 characters in the Chinese language (according to the dictionary of Emperor K'ang-hsi), a knowledge of about 3,000 characters is required for adequate newspaper reading. Under the leadership of the People's Army, army newspapers, as well as newspapers in general, serve as texts for basic reading exercises. According to army data for December 1949, most soldiers had only grammar school education or none at all. Many divisions devoted 5 hours per week to reading and writing lessons in July 1949. Examinations in the spring of 1950 showed that each soldier had learned an average of 370 characters in 5 months. Chen Shih-pin, a simple soldier who has been decorated in battle, is the model of the literacy movement. He learned 2,000 characters in 7 months.

At present, instruction in the army education drive has reached 31 hours per week which amounts to 70.2 percent of the total training time. The rest of the time is spent in military training and political instruction. By the fall of 1952, every soldier will have the equivalent of an elementary school education, and will be eligible for higher education.

As a result of the increased education, the circulation of newspapers is constantly increasing. Between the spring and fall of 1950, the following circulation increases took place: the Tung-pei Jih-pao of Mukden, from 150,000 to 200,000 copies; the Nan-fang Jih-pao of Cantor, from 30,000 to 50,000 copies; the Lao-tung Jih-pao of Shanghai, from 50,000 to 80,000 copies; and the Ch'un-chung (farm journal), from 30,000 to 90,000 copies.

Similar figures are true of other newspapers. It is important to point out that circulation figures are not identical with the number of readers. Chinese sources state that each copy of a newspaper has ten readers (students in the same class, workers of the same plant, peasants in the villages, soldiers in the same unit). In addition, news and articles are individually published by means of wall newspapers, reproduced by stencils, etc. Also emulating the Soviets are the "newspaper reading groups," which are spread all over China. Newspapers are read aloud, and discussed. Through this innovation, even the illiterates have thus become regular "newspaper readers." Newspapers often take the initiative in organizing such groups. The Su-nan Jih-pao recently reported organizing 183 of these groups, totaling 1,839 participants.

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Further growth of newspapers is assured through increased newsprint production. At the paper industry conference held recently, it was decided to increase the 1950 newsprint production by 87.5 percent over 1950 figures, so that journals, pamphlets, and books could be disseminated freely.

Close contact with the people is maintained at all times, and letters to the editor are very popular. The Peiping Jen-min Jih-pao, the organ of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party receives about 400 letters daily from workers and farmers. All newspapers give space to such letters, and when a letter is not printed, the editors answer it themselves or forward it to the proper authorities. Such letters are treated like news, often getting first-page spreads. The masses know that they can appeal to their newspapers, telling them their troubles, exposing the inefficiency of local functionaries, and asking for advice about matrimonial troubles.

The people do the reporting themselves. The Hopeh Jih-pao has over 1,600 correspondents, the Su-pei Jih-pao 1,200 correspondents, and the Fukien Jih-pao more than 5,000 regular correspondents. Labor newspapers exceed these figures by far. The Shanghai Lao-tung Pao has over 7,000 correspondents.

Criticism and self-criticism are greatly encouraged. Without this, the gulf between government, party, and the people would become wider and thus endanger further progress. The party realizes this, and on 19 April 1950, came out with the Resolution Concerning the Development of Criticism and Self-criticism Through the Press.

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